USACHPPM HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO) UPDATE

5 November 2004

The HIO Update provides information regarding global medical and veterinary issues of interest to the United States (US) Army. The update does not attempt to analyze the information as to its strategic or tactical impact on the US Army and should not be regarded as a medical intelligence product. Medical intelligence products are available from the Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center. The information in the HIO Update should provide an increased awareness of current and emerging health-related issues.

To subscribe, send an email to: hio-ON@pasba2.amedd.army.mil
To unsubscribe, send an email to: hio-OFF@pasba2.amedd.army.mil
This report is also available on the USACHPPM website.

HO	I TOPICS	2
	DOD Health Official Says Flu Vaccine Shortage Is 'Manageable'	2
	Excess Weight Hurts Even Seemingly Healthy Heart	
	Experiment Stretches Flu Vaccine for Healthy	
	Flu Shots Decrease Elderly Deaths Overall	
	Memory Loss Tied to Pulled Teeth	
	Monkeypox Can Cause Range of Illnesses in Humans	
	New Methods Control Bugs without Drugs New Vaccine against Rotavirus has Promise	
	Roche's Tamiflu Works Against Bird Flu Strain-Study	
	Study Explores Link Between Power Lines, Childhood Leukemia	
	WHO Calls Summit Meeting to Address Flu Pandemic	
	WHO Presses Governments to Update Disease Control Rules	
FOC	cus on Epidemiology	
	Laboratory Exposure to Burkholderia pseudomallei – July 2003	
	DoD-GEIS: Avian Influenza	6
US	CENTCOM	6
	Typhoid Fever Increasing in Kyrgyzstan	
H	EUCOM	7
UJ.	Cholera Outbreak Grips Burundi	
	Cholera Outbreak Hits Ugandan Refugee Camp	
	Guinea-Bissau: Cholera Kills Three, Infects 58	<i>1</i>
	Namibia: Anthrax Outbreak	
	Outbreak of Mumps among Students	
	Russia: 95 People Diagnosed with Hepatitis A in Kaliningrad	
	Scotland: Mumps Outbreak	
	Senegal: Nearly 200 People Catch Cholera in Dakar	9
	South Africa: Measles Outbreak Sparks Immunization Drive	9
USI	NORTHCOM	g
J J.	Chi-Chi's Chain Broke One Year after Hepatitis Outbreak	
	Flamingo Hotel Suffers Virus Outbreak	
	Governor's Aide to Explain Flu Plan to FDA	

Mystery Illness Breaks Out in Milwaukee Hotel	
NIH Funds Research on How Pathogens Trigger Immune Response	
State Health Investigators Looking at More E. Coli Cases	
USPACOM	11
China, 2 Koreas, Mongolia Join Forces to Fight Bird Flu	
Hong Kong Heron Had Killer Bird Flu	
India: Dengue and Malaria Spread in Maharashtra	
Malaysia: Study Finds 23 Percent of Bazaar Food Contaminated With E. Coli	
Rodents Cause China Plague Outbreak	
Taiwan Takes Steps to Prevent New SARS Outbreak	12
USSOUTHCOM	12
Brazil: Yellow Fever	

HOT TOPICS

DOD Health Official Says Flu Vaccine Shortage Is 'Manageable'

1 November – The Stars and Stripes reported that as a result of the Pentagon's ongoing efforts to get the influenza vaccine to deployed troops and high-risk individuals, there is a chance of a "low flu season," the Department of Defense's top health official said recently. Dr. William Winkenwerder, the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said the shortage of flu shots is "a very manageable problem, a very manageable situation." Although the military has received only 60 percent of the supply it requested, the military should be able to manage the situation without any difficulty, Winkenwerder said. Because of the shortage, DOD health officials have started a campaign to help prevent the spread of the disease. View Article

Excess Weight Hurts Even Seemingly Healthy Heart

1 November – HealthDayNews reported that apparently healthy <u>obese</u> people are suffering silent heart damage that sets the stage for serious cardiac problems. Researchers found the blood-pumping left ventricle of severely obese persons had a significantly weakened ability to contract and expand. And smaller but still significant weaknesses in blood-pumping ability were found in people with lesser degrees of obesity or overweight. One key finding in the new study was these first signs of future heart failure were detected in obese persons who had no existing heart disease and were free of high blood pressure and diabetes, two major risk factors for heart failure. They also had a normal ejection fraction, the conventional measure of blood-pumping ability. The study showed "a direct relationship" between the degree of obesity and the loss of pumping ability, Marwick said. View Article

Experiment Stretches Flu Vaccine for Healthy

4 November – Yahoo! News reported that it might be possible to stretch out the US supply of <u>fluvaccine</u> by diluting it and injecting it differently. The approach does not work for those most at risk from influenza -- people over 60 -- but could be used to vaccinate healthier adults who care for highrisk people and do not wish to infect them. "We found that we can give lower doses of vaccine, 40 percent of the full dose, if we gave the vaccine not as a shot into the muscle, but if we gave the shot 'intradermally' between the layers of the skin," said Dr. Robert Belshe of St. Louis University in Missouri, who led the study. "This lower-dose intradermal vaccine worked well in adults 18 to 60 years

of age." Belshe said, "Younger people may need less vaccine, and older people may need more vaccine." The U.S. vaccine supply for younger healthy persons conceivably could be multiplied 2.5 times using the approach, the researchers report. They found that volunteers under age 61, who received 40 percent of the usual dose, were as well-protected against flu when injected in the skin as those who received in-muscle injections with the standard dose. In the second study, a team led by Richard Kenny of Iomai Corp. in Gaithersburg, Maryland, which is involved in delivering drugs through the skin, found that one fifth of the standard dose, if injected under the skin surface, provided protection equal to, or better than, muscle injections. View Article

Flu Shots Decrease Elderly Deaths Overall

2 November - MSNBC reported that yearly <u>flu shots</u> significantly reduce deaths from all causes in people 65 and older. Dr. A.C.G. Voordouw at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and colleagues analyzed the effectiveness of the Netherlands' nationwide vaccine program using data on 26,071 residents 65 and older from 1996 through 2002. Compared with unvaccinated people, those who had any flu shots were 22 percent less likely to die of any cause during the period studied. Compared with people who got just one shot, those who were vaccinated annually were 15 percent less likely to die of any cause — and 28 percent less likely to die during seasons when flu reached epidemic levels. View Article

Memory Loss Tied to Pulled Teeth

30 October – HealthDayNews reported that when the dentist pulls one of your teeth you may also be forfeiting some memory. A Swedish study of 1,962 people compared the memories of those who had lost all their teeth and wore dentures with those who still had teeth. "When people have no teeth their memories are clearly worse than when they have teeth," researcher Jan Bergdahl, associate professor of psychology at Umeaa University said. While previous studies on rats and monkeys found a link between teeth and memory, this is the first large-scale study on humans to find the same association. He and his colleagues don't know how much impact the loss of a single tooth may have on memory. They plan to investigate how many teeth a person needs to lose before their memory is affected, and how tooth decay and tooth implants affect memory loss. View Article

Monkeypox Can Cause Range of Illnesses in Humans

29 October – Reuters UK reported that in June 2003, the first outbreak in the Western hemisphere of human monkeypox infection occurred in the midwestern United States. Close contact with infected wild or exotic pets, mainly prairie dogs, was discovered to be the cause of the outbreak. US health officials now warn that people exposed to monkeypox virus can develop a wide spectrum of clinical illnesses, including severe neurologic illness. Researchers described the variations in symptoms in a cluster of monkeypox cases in one family exposed to a common source of the virus. "These three patients illustrate a spectrum of clinical illness with monkeypox despite a common source of exposure," the researches write, noting that age and prior smallpox vaccination may affect the severity of monkeypox illness. Wiew Article

New Methods Control Bugs without Drugs

1 November – Yahoo! News reported that researchers have developed at least two new methods of fighting infection without the use of antibiotics. Each illustrates potential new ways to fight the growing problem of superbugs -- bacteria that have mutated the ability to resist most or even all of the antibiotics used against them. A single squirt of the bacteria-killing enzyme may keep an infected person from sneezing out bacteria for up to a week, said Dr. Vincent Fischetti of Rockefeller

University in New York. "These are enzymes that, basically, punch a hole in the bacteria and cause them to explode," Fischetti said. They have used them to decontaminate animals of pesky bacteria such as Group A *streptococci* and *staphylococci*. "We can eliminate these organisms from the noses of these animals," Fischetti said. They tried it intravenously against the anthrax bacillus. "We could save 90 percent of the animals with a single dose of the enzyme," said Fischetti, whose work is funded by the Department of Defense's Advanced Research Projects Agency or DARPA. Dr. Richard Novick and colleagues at New York University's medical school looked specifically for ways to stop bacteria from attaching to and killing cells in the body. They found peptides -- short pieces of proteins -- that regulate this behavior by bacteria. "We can disarm the organism ... simply by introducing one of these inhibitory factors." It turns out that the first three hours are critical for infecting bacteria to get a foothold, Novick said. The peptide holds the bacteria in check just long enough to give immune system cells time to get there and destroy the invaders. The peptide, called auto-inducing peptide, affects signaling within the bacteria. View Article

New Vaccine against Rotavirus has Promise

1 November – AZCentral.com reported that a new vaccine against <u>rotavirus</u>, the diarrheal infection that kills millions of children worldwide, does not appear to raise the risk of serious bowel blockages that caused a previous vaccine to be pulled from the market five years ago. The new vaccine, Rotarix, was recently licensed in Mexico and is expected to go on sale there this year. Its maker, Belgiumbased GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, plans to seek similar approvals throughout Latin America, Asia and Europe, and to launch a study in the US aimed at getting it approved for American infants. <u>View Article</u>

Researchers Testing Cervical Cancer Vaccine

31 October – HealthDayNews reported that researchers are working on a vaccine that would prevent viral infections known to cause cervical cancer. By protecting against human.papilloma.virus, the inoculation could save lives and possibly end the need for Pap smear tests. Initial clinical trials have shown the vaccine is 100 percent effective against strains of HPV responsible for approximately 70 percent of cervical cancers. While some strains of the HPV virus only cause genital warts, others cause cervical cancer, the second most common cause of cancer death in women worldwide. Scientists at both GlaxoSmithKline and Merck Sharp & Dohme are working on such a vaccine, but it probably won't be available for several years. View Article

Roche's Tamiflu Works Against Bird Flu Strain-Study

1 November - Reuters UK reported that Roche AG's Tamiflu anti-influenza drug has been proven to work against H5N1; the strain of the <u>avian flu</u> virus that the World Health Organization says could be the source of a deadly flu pandemic. Researchers said that oseltamivir, marketed by Roche as Tamiflu, is effective against avian and human forms of the virus, which has so far killed 32 people this year. "Since the influenza virus is constantly mutating, today's is the first data to show oseltamivir to be effective against this highly pathogenic strain, which is currently circulating in Vietnam and Thailand," the researchers. The WHO had already singled out Tamiflu as its drug of choice to protect against bird flu and in case of a human flu pandemic. Tamiflu belongs to A drug class known as neuraminidase inhibitors, which block the action of viral enzymes. It was previously proven effective in managing an outbreak of the H7N7 avian strain in the Netherlands in 2003, which infected around 1,000 people. View Article

Study Explores Link Between Power Lines, Childhood Leukemia

30 October – HealthDayNews reported that children living near high-voltage power cables may have double the risk of developing <u>leukemia</u>. However, the researchers cautioned that they weren't able to find a definitive link between the cables and the disease. The seven-year study by England's Department of Health indicated that children living within 100 meters of high-voltage electricity cables were more likely to suffer from leukemia. A total of 70,000 children under 15 years of age were studied as part of the research - half of the children had cancer. The scientists concluded that, for a small number of the children with the disease, high-voltage electricity may have been a factor in their illness. But other factors, including chance, could account for the finding. <u>View Article</u>

WHO Calls Summit Meeting to Address Flu Pandemic

1 November – ABC News reported that the World Health Organization has called an unprecedented summit meeting of <u>flu vaccine</u> makers and nations to deal with the threat of a flu pandemic. Sixteen vaccine companies and health officials from the United States and other large countries already have agreed to attend the summit in Geneva, Switzerland, on 11 November. The world's total capacity for flu vaccine now is only 300 million doses, and it would take at least six months to develop a new vaccine to fight a pandemic. The US is the only nation that has commissioned work on potential pandemic bird flu vaccines. If a pandemic occurred and a vaccine wasn't ready, antiviral drugs could play a key role in slowing its spread, said Dr. Frederick Hayden, a University of Virginia virus expert who has researched and consulted on many flu vaccines and drugs including oseltamivir, or Tamiflu, which showed some activity against bird flu in lab experiments. It, too, is in short supply. "It's hard to get explicit numbers but the production capacity worldwide is very limited," making it difficult to develop an international stockpile that could be used in a pandemic, Hayden said. <u>View Article</u>

WHO Presses Governments to Update Disease Control Rules

4 November – Yahoo! News reported that the World Health Organisation (WHO) wants governments to update rules for stopping the spread of infectious diseases across borders, amid fears that the current measures cannot tackle new threats such as SARS, the Ebola virus or bird flu. Talks on new regulations have over the past decade become bogged down by concerns over their potential economic impact, but recent outbreaks of previously unknown diseases like SARS and bird flu have forced governments back to the negotiating table. During a meeting with about 140 countries in Geneva, the WHO will try to secure agreement on the outline of new International Health Regulations. The UN health agency wants the scope of the regulations to be broadened to cover "public health emergencies of international concern" instead of a restricted list of infectious diseases. Its proposals also place the emphasis on action by national health authorities to control diseases within their borders and give the WHO power to issue international recommendations. The draft would also oblige countries to notify the WHO of health problems. View Article

Focus on Epidemiology

Laboratory Exposure to *Burkholderia pseudomallei* – July 2003

29 October – MMWR reported that in July 2003, a clinical laboratory isolated from specimens <u>Burkholderia pseudomallei</u>, a category B biologic terrorism agent and the causative organism for melioidosis, which is endemic to certain tropical areas. Because laboratory workers had manipulated cultures of the organism, CDC was asked to assist in the subsequent investigation. The findings of this report underscore the need to reinforce proper laboratory practices and the potential benefits of chemoprophylaxis after laboratory exposures. The specimens were taken from a man evaluated at a local emergency department (ED) for fever, chills, and chest and leg pain. He had returned from El Salvador 3 days before visiting the ED. Bacterial isolates from all specimens were presumptively identified as *B. pseudomallei* by the laboratory's automated identification system and subsequently confirmed. A total of 17 laboratory workers had manipulated cultures from these specimens. These workers were considered exposed and were offered antibiotic chemoprophylaxis within 48 hours of their exposures. Sixteen workers completed a 3-week regimen of trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole, and one completed a 3-week regimen of doxycycline. None of the exposed laboratory workers had symptoms consistent with melioidosis during 5 months after exposure. No laboratory workers in this investigation were infected with *B. pseudomallei*. View Report

DoD-GEIS: Avian Influenza

On 28 October, WHO released preliminary information from a study completed by St Jude Children's Research Hospital. St Jude, located in Memphis, TN, is the collaborating center for animal influenza viruses. According to WHO, the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus replicates in the respiratory and intestinal tracts of experimentally infected domestic ducks and ducks in contact with them. Large amounts of virus are excreted via the respiratory route as well as in feces. No symptoms or deaths were observed in the majority of ducks and contacts that were infected with human and chicken H5N1 viruses from the 2004 outbreaks in Viet Nam. The amounts of H5N1 virus shed were sufficient to allow transmission of H5N1 infection directly from apparently healthy ducks to chickens. Regarding viral shedding, all infected ducks shed virus for 11 days and some for 17 days and longer. By comparison, ducks infected with an H5N1 virus isolated in 2003 shed virus for a maximum of 10 days. Preliminary results on the environmental stability indicate that H5N1 viruses from the 2004 outbreaks have become more stable. H5N1 viruses from 2004 survived at 37°C for 6 days, compared with 2 days for viruses from the 1997 outbreak. The studies were completed recently by researchers at St Jude. WHO says that the main findings are being made public, in advance of publication, because of their significance for human health. Information on many "hot topics" such as Influenza (avian and human), Leishmaniasis and severe respiratory syndromes, including SARS, is available on the DoD-GEIS website; for information on ongoing investigations, see the DOD-GEIS secure site.

Other timely information can be found in:

The current issue of the Army Medical Surveillance Activity's <u>Medical Surveillance Monthly Report</u>
This week's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's <u>Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report</u>

USCENTCOM

Typhoid Fever Increasing in Kyrgyzstan

1 November – ProMED reported that Kyrgyzstan is still experiencing problems with water cleaning systems, especially in remote regions, resulting in many outbreaks in different parts of Kyrgyzstan:

Osh City – Since July 2004, 103 patients were hospitalized in the infectious disease department with a preliminary diagnosis of <u>typhoid fever</u>. Twenty-four were confirmed by lab data. Four cases of paratyphoid type-B were also diagnosed in October 2004. Currently, 3 more people with a preliminary diagnosis of typhoid fever, and four with a confirmed diagnosis, have been admitted to the local hospital.

Talass City – Since August 2004, 71 patients have been hospitalized with a preliminary diagnosis of typhoid. Thirty-eight of them were confirmed in the laboratory. One of the patients died due to intestinal hemorrhage. There were also 2 cases of paratyphoid type-B reported in the same village.

Batken City – Some 110 confirmed cases of typhoid have been registered in Batken City since June 2004. Presently, 15 patients with a confirmed diagnosis are in the Hospital.

Jalalabad City - From 8 to 20 Oct 2004, 63 patients were hospitalized with a preliminary diagnosis of typhoid, 38 of them confirmed by laboratory analysis. Most of the patients are schoolchildren. The likely hypothesis of the cause of the outbreak in that school may be the use of contaminated water for drinking. So far, 2 cultures of typhoid bacillus were obtained from a local river. View Article

USEUCOM

Cholera Outbreak Grips Burundi

29 October – IOL reported that a <u>cholera</u> epidemic has struck the town of Rumonge in the central African state of Burundi, with at least 140 cases and one death reported since mid-October. Cholera is endemic in the town due to "lack of drinking water and poor hygiene typical of Rumonge", said local health care chief Dr. Gloriose Nahimana. "The arrival of the rainy season every year worsens the situation and this time the problem has become particularly acute," she warned. <u>View Article</u>

Cholera Outbreak Hits Ugandan Refugee Camp

29 October – Mail & Guardian Online reported that a <u>cholera</u> outbreak has killed two people and affected about 50 others in a camp for people who fled their homes to escape an 18-year insurgency in northern Uganda. The outbreak was triggered by the contamination of water sources and poor sanitary conditions in the Pabbo camp that is home to about 67,000 people, said Chulho Hyun, a spokesperson for the UN children's agency. Household latrine coverage at the camp is only 12% and all household domestic water pots are contaminated with feces, as are two out of 14 boreholes and all six springs in the camp. Three to four cases of cholera are being reported daily. Aid workers are isolating patients and are urging residents to dig more pit latrines and use chlorinated water to contain the outbreak, UN officials said. <u>View Article</u>

Guinea-Bissau: Cholera Kills Three, Infects 58

2 November – AllAfrica.com reported that a <u>cholera</u> outbreak in the Bijagos archipelago, off the capital, Bissau, has infected 58 people, killing three. The outbreak started in a fishing community in Orangozinho Island among fishermen from neighboring Guinea and Senegal. By Monday, three out of the 58 people who were reportedly infected had died. The Guinea Bissau authorities said the situation was under control, but appealed to international donors present in Bissau for cash and equipment. Guinea has had more than 1,000 cases of cholera and close to a hundred deaths in recent months; however, the disease is now subsiding there. In Senegal, cholera broke out on 11 October and has so far infected 446 people, four of whom have died. <u>View Article</u>

Namibia: Anthrax Outbreak

28 October – AllAfrica.com reported that the Omaheke Region has been placed under quarantine following reports that an unspecified number of cattle were driven across the border from Botswana into Namibia. The ban on the movement of cattle could however not be officially confirmed last night as most veterinary officers in Omaheke were out in the field, presumably searching for the animals. A restriction on the movement of animals was earlier imposed on the village of Leonardville, situated about five to six kilometers from Aminuis, after suspicions of anthrax were reported amongst goats and sheep at two unspecified farming plots. Two people were also admitted to hospital, after eating meat infected with anthrax. Their condition is said to be stable and that they are responding well to treatment. Although the anthrax situation in the Caprivi is now reportedly stable, it is still life threatening. Large areas of wildlife in the Caprivi's national game parks have been affected. View Article

Outbreak of Mumps among Students

2 November – Medical News Today reported that universities across the UK are launching a mass MMR vaccination campaign in a bid to control the latest outbreak of <u>mumps</u> amongst students. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) believes that nearly 3,000 students and young people could be infected with mumps by the end of the year if the current outbreak continues. One reason for the epidemic could be that the infected people were too old to have been offered the MMR vaccines routinely as children. Dr Mary Ramsay from the HPA said, "We recommend that those in this age group, for example school leavers and those starting university, who have not received MMR or had only one dose, should be offered MMR." Universities in Oxford, Manchester, Leeds, Kent, Nottingham and Birmingham are planning campus vaccination days as well as raising the profile of the disease through student websites and newspapers. View Article

Russia: 95 People Diagnosed with Hepatitis A in Kaliningrad

2 November – ProMED reported that hepatitis A is seriously affecting the population of the Kaliningrad region. Last week 95 people were admitted to hospital with a diagnosis of hepatitis A, and 38 of them were children. Due to the prevalence of hepatitis A among children, officials have begun vaccinating contacts. So far 292 people identified as contacts have been vaccinated. Different anti-epidemic and disinfection measures have been organized to prevent the spread of the infection. But the region urgently needs more vaccine. The water supply system is undergoing urgent maintenance. View Article

Scotland: Mumps Outbreak

1 November – The Evening Times reported that a top doctor is warning parents to have their children immunized after a one-year-old became the latest victim of a <u>mumps</u> outbreak. Dr. Syed Ahmed, a public health consultant for Greater Glasgow Health Board, spoke out after figures revealed seven babies under one, and 27 children under four, are being tested for the disease. In Scotland, cases of the disease are spiraling out of control, with over 1973 cases reported so far this year, compared with 114 by the same time last year. Doctors diagnosed 112 cases in one week earlier this month. Most of those cases have been in Glasgow, where 1050 suspected cases of mumps have been reported. Dr. Ahmed said: "In Glasgow, we have had an 86% uptake of the mumps, measles and rubella vaccine, but that still leaves a sizable minority of parents who have not had their babies immunized." People in the 13-25 age group are most at risk of catching mumps. Glasgow doctors are being urged to offer MMR vaccines to young people who were too old to be offered the vaccine as babies. View

Article

Senegal: Nearly 200 People Catch Cholera in Dakar

29 October - Reuters AlertNet reported that nearly 200 cases of <u>cholera</u> have been confirmed in the Senegalese capital Dakar since 11 October, but so far only two people have died. The two fatalities were both people who were in an advanced stage of the illness when they were brought to hospital in the early days of the outbreak. The water-borne disease, which causes acute diarrhea and vomiting, had so far been largely contained within Dakar, a city of 2.5 million people. <u>View Article</u>

South Africa: Measles Outbreak Sparks Immunization Drive

2 November – IOL reported that more than 3,400 people have been immunized in two days after an outbreak of <u>measles</u> in the Imizamo Yethu informal settlement near Hout Bay. The Cape Town health department has confirmed 10 cases of young adults who have been diagnosed with the disease, and it is thought likely that a three-year-old child has been infected. No specific age group had been targeted for immunization, but the department concentrated on people who had recently moved into the area and children from other countries. The department of health has urged schools to encourage children under 15 who had not been immunized to have it done. View Article

Zimbabwe: Measles Outbreak at Nyika Growth Point

28 October - AllAfrica.com reported an outbreak of <u>measles</u> at Nyika Growth Point in Bikita district where 41 cases --- but no deaths -- have been reported over the past two weeks. Most of those affected are children aged six and seven. Acting Masvingo provincial medical director Dr Charles Sandy yesterday confirmed the outbreak the disease and said, "We deployed our team from here to go and assist there, but our main handicap has been shortage of vaccines. We are already in the process of procuring the vaccines from Harare (to fight the outbreak) and to beef up our stocks." <u>View Article</u>

USNORTHCOM

Chi-Chi's Chain Broke One Year after Hepatitis Outbreak

31 October - WCPO.com reported that one year ago, more than 600 people were sickened from hepatitis A in green onions served at a Chi-Chi's restaurant. Four of the victims would later die. Since then, the Louisville, Kentucky-based Chi-Chi's chain has vanished and more than 300 legal claims have been settled for about \$10 million. The produce industry and the Food and Drug Administration have taken steps to make the nation's fresh fruit and vegetables safer. View Article

Flamingo Hotel Suffers Virus Outbreak

1 November - KTVU.com reported that for the second time in less than a year a major outbreak of the norovirus has been confirmed at a Las Vegas hotel. Several hundred employees and guests at the Flamingo Las Vegas have come down with the bug over the last few weeks, exhibiting flu-like symptoms including headaches, vomiting and diarrhea. For most people, the virus is not serious, usually passing within a couple of days. But it can be dangerous for people with compromised

immune systems or other serious health problems. The owners and staff of the hotel are working with health officials to contain the outbreak, although with a virus like this one that's not easy. Norovirus is spread easily by contact with surfaces where it is present. <u>View Article</u>

Governor's Aide to Explain Flu Plan to FDA

28 October – The Chicago Sun-Times reported that Gov. Rod Blagojevich is sending his point man for the state's prescription drug importation plan to answer federal drug regulators' questions about Illinois' plan to buy <u>flu vaccine</u> from Europe. The governor has a tentative deal with British wholesaler Ecosse to buy about 262,000 doses of an Aventis Pasteur flu vaccine that was manufactured for use in Canada and Europe. Federal officials, warn that the vaccine still might be made differently and that purchase through a wholesaler opens up other potential problems that could leave the vaccine ineffective. The FDA wants to work with the state but wants more information about the source of the flu vaccine supply, the vaccine's distribution and whether the state would provide liability protection for consumers. <u>View Article</u>

Mystery Illness Breaks Out in Milwaukee Hotel

29 October – WAOW.com reported that 21 states are on alert after a mystery illness broke out at a Milwaukee hotel. At least 120 people taking part in a computer conference at the Hilton reported severe flu-like symptoms. Paul Biedrzycki of the Milwaukee health department said that "because it occurred over a week a go it's tough to trace the exposures of 300 people," who are now scattered across the country. The health department is looking at norovirus, because there was recently an outbreak of that at a Milwaukee school. View Article

NIH Funds Research on How Pathogens Trigger Immune Response

2 November - CIDRAP News reported that the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has awarded contracts worth more than \$73 million to study the mechanisms by which certain infectious agents, including potential bioterror agents, trigger immune reactions. Fourteen contracts have been approved for the Large-Scale Antibody and T Cell Epitope Discovery Program. Epitopes are the regions of infectious agents that elicit immune responses. Studying them may uncover new targets for vaccines, therapies, and diagnostic tools against potential bioterror agents. Such research also could reveal targets among emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases such as influenza and West Nile virus. View Article

State Health Investigators Looking at More E. Coli Cases

4 November – WSOC TV.com reported that state health investigators say there are 24 confirmed cases of *E. coli* infection and that they're looking at nine more cases. The most common link so far between infections is a petting zoo exhibit at the North Carolina State Fair. Fifteen of the cases were in people who attended the fair and one other was in someone who attended the Cleveland County fair. State health officials say if the petting zoo is the common link for the infection that thousands of people could have been exposed. The type of *E. coli* that has sickened the North Carolina people is common in cattle, goats and sheep. It causes the animals no harm but causes severe diarrhea and possible kidney damage in humans. View Article

USPACOM

China, 2 Koreas, Mongolia Join Forces to Fight Bird Flu

2 November - INQ7.net reported that China has joined forces with North Korea, South Korea, and Mongolia in the fight against bird flu, setting up a diagnostic laboratory and surveillance network linking the four countries. The network will have its lead laboratory in northeast China's Harbin City. The idea is to prompt laboratories to share research on bird flu and provide guidance to other countries in the region that may be at risk of infection, said Sarah Kahn, a senior official with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). "We've seen China has done a lot of good work in bird flu research. We hope it can provide some related staff training for other countries in East Asia." She said all countries still needed to do more work to combat bird flu in areas such as detecting infection in ducks and finding out more about categories of virus in wild birds. View Article

Hong Kong Heron Had Killer Bird Flu

3 November – Reuters reported that a dead gray heron found in Hong Kong near the mainland China border was found to have the H5N1 <u>bird flu</u> virus. "The gray heron tested positive for H5N1," a government spokesman said, referring to the bird recently found dead in the Lok Ma Chau area. "We have already inspected the chicken farms nearby and we have found no bird flu symptoms or abnormal deaths among those chickens," Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, S.P. Lau, told a news conference. Hong Kong has been a major concern for health experts, who are worried about a comeback of bird flu because the territory is a favorite resting place for migratory birds, a natural reservoir of the virus during the winter months. <u>View Article</u>

India: Dengue and Malaria Spread in Maharashtra

27 October – The Hindustan Times reported that the aftermath of the monsoon rains has seen 1,400 cases of <u>dengue</u> being recorded in Maharashtra's public hospitals and many cases of <u>malaria</u>. The worst affected areas are urban centers like Mumbai, Pune, Akola and Nashik. This does not take into account dengue cases in private hospitals. The spread of malaria is also alarming with private doctors in Mumbai alone reporting as many as 10-15 cases of falciparum malaria a day. Private doctors here said there have been a large number of deaths as well, though health officials don't have exact figures. <u>View Article</u>

Malaysia: Study Finds 23 Percent of Bazaar Food Contaminated With E. Coli

26 October - Utusan Online reported that the food sold at Ramadan bazaars may be tempting, but some of it may not be hygienic. The Terengganu Health Department found nearly a quarter of the food contaminated with the intestinal pathogen *Escherichia coli*. Some 81 samples of food sold in the first 11 days of the fasting month were analyzed, and 23 percent were found contaminated with *E. coli* while five percent had *Staphylococcus aureus*. The contaminated samples included 'agar-agar', 'ondeonde', 'kuih nekbat', tomato chicken, sugarcane juice, 'nira' juice, meat curry, 'kerabu perut' (intestines with vegetable salad), 'asam gumpal' and 'kuih butir nangka'. A joint check with the local authorities on 1,231 business premises resulted in 32 workers being fined for not having Typhi-V inoculation and not wearing aprons. View Article

Rodents Cause China Plague Outbreak

28 October – ABC News Online reported that an outbreak of the <u>plague</u> has claimed more than half a dozen lives in China. Eight people have died and 11 others have been infected in an outbreak of the bubonic plague in north-west China. State media says most of the cases involved farmers or herdsmen in the poor Qinghai province, who caught the disease by eating rodents. The plague periodically resurfaces in China. Last month one person died and another was infected. The authorities say this latest outbreak has been brought under control. <u>View Article</u>

Taiwan Takes Steps to Prevent New SARS Outbreak

1 November – The Star Online reported that Taiwanese health officials urged the public to check their temperatures daily and wear surgical masks when visiting hospitals, as the island began a series of measures to guard against a new <u>SARS</u> outbreak. The last global SARS outbreak was believed to have begun at this time of year in 2002, when Taiwan was ranked No. 3 in the world behind China and Hong Kong for infections and deaths. Those traveling to China and Hong Kong should avoid eating or coming into contact with wildlife. <u>View Article</u>

USSOUTHCOM

Brazil: Yellow Fever

31 October – ProMED reported that in South America, monkey deaths, particularly of howler monkeys signal the probable arrival of <u>yellow fever</u>. On 13 September, the first monkey deaths of 2004 were reported in Tocantins state. On 16 September, two more dead monkeys were reported, and there were more notifications on 21 and 28 September, all in different townships. A state of alert was declared for Tocantins & Goias. On 1 October, a *Cebus apella* monkey was found dead close to the border with Mato Grosso state. About 300 families live in the area. Vaccination was intensified in that area, and the population of the region was alerted to the importance of getting vaccinated. The states of Bahia & Piaui, declared official yellow fever alerts. <u>View Article</u>

Please contact us to comment on or suggest improvements to this report.

Eileen Resta eileen.resta@amedd.army.mil

Tyson Grier tyson.grier@amedd.army.mil

Approved:
Kevin Delaney
Chief, Health Information Operations (410) 436-5217 or DSN 584-5217